

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER & REGULATORY AFFAIRS



April 29, 2009

Dear Motor Vehicle Repair Dealer:

The D.C. Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) has issued final regulations on outdoor auto repair and storage by consumer goods repair dealers in the District of Columbia. These new regulations, entitled Outdoor Repair and Storage of Vehicles (D.C. Municipal Regulations, Title 16, Section 652), may require substantial changes to how you do business. A copy of the new regulations is enclosed with this letter.

The new regulations are intended to prevent outdoor repair and storage activities that can detract from the attractiveness of District neighborhoods or threaten harm to the environment. The regulations were first published in the D.C. Register as a proposed rulemaking on March 6, 2009, and were republished in the D.C. Register as a final and effective rulemaking on April 24, 2009 (56 DCR 3096).

Under the new regulations, consumer goods repair dealers are required to perform auto repairs inside a permanent garage or other permanent building, except for minor repairs and emergency road services. Emergency road services – which are the only auto repair services that dealers may perform off their licensed premises – are limited to *minor services on disabled vehicles*, such as jump-starting engines, replacing batteries, and changing tires. All other repair services must be performed on the dealers' premises. In addition, most repairs performed on the dealers' premises, including oil changes, must be performed indoors. Examples of minor repairs that may be performed outdoors include changing light bulbs or air filters or adding washer fluid or motor oil, but do not include removing motor vehicle fluids.

The new regulations also clarify that the District's regulations on Outdoor Storage of Motor Vehicles (D.C. Municipal Regulations, Title 16, Section 314) limit the ability of consumer goods repair dealers to store vehicles on their premises. Dealers may keep on their premises any number of (1) customer vehicles for the purpose of repairing them, (2) vehicles parked by customers, employees, and other daily visitors, and (3) vehicles that are actively used in the dealers' businesses. However, a dealer may not store more than four other vehicles, such as vehicles that the dealer has acquired and is in the process of restoring. A dealer must keep records on the premises – such as repair orders – showing which vehicles are customer vehicles being held by the dealer for repair.

DCRA will enforce the new regulations in stages. In stage one, which ends May 31, 2009, DCRA will educate dealers and the public about the new regulations and encourage voluntary compliance. In stage two, which begins June 1, 2009, and ends June 30, 2009, DCRA will enforce the new restrictions on off-premise repairs, as well as the restrictions

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on outdoor storage of motor vehicles. In stage three, which begins July 1, 2009, DCRA will enforce the new restrictions on outdoor repairs, but not against dealers who have applied to DCRA for permits to make improvements that would correct their violations, such as building permits needed to construct garages in which to repair motor vehicles. In stage four, which begins September 1, 2009, DCRA will begin enforcing against all violations of the new regulations.

Dealers who are unable to apply for necessary permits by July 1, 2009, or who are unable to come into full compliance by September 1, 2009, may request extensions of time, which DCRA will grant only for good cause shown. Requests for extensions of time should be sent to Juva Hepburn, Acting Program Manager of the Business License Division.

For help with questions about what permits you may need, you may visit our web-site at [www.dkra.dc.gov](http://www.dkra.dc.gov) and click on "Building Permits."

Sincerely,

*Juva Hepburn*

Acting Program Manager  
Business License Division

Enclosure:

Notice of Final Rulemaking (Outdoor Repair and Storage of Motor Vehicles)